

2. Has anyone come across new colonisation?
  3. Is elm disease the over-riding factor for decline, or are others suggested by evidence? (i.e. trees still surviving).
  4. Has anyone actual proof that the species has bred successfully in the wild on elm other than wych elm?
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## Notes and Observations

**PARTHENOGENESIS.** — In reply to M. J. Symes' note (*Ent. Rec.* 92: 52-53), parthenogenesis would seem to be responsible from the eggs produced from his female of *Selenia bilunaria*. He is right in assuming that the ova were almost certainly diploid, but this does not mean that all offspring are necessarily genetically identical. Many Psychidae have been shown to undergo automictic (meiotic) parthenogenesis, in which a normal reduction division occurs, but two of the (haploid) nuclei then fuse to restore the diploid number of chromosomes. This process is clearly comparable with the fusion of two gametes from different individuals, and will produce genetic variation amongst the offspring, since the reduction nuclei from a single organism are not all identical.

The sudden death of the larvae may also be attributable to parthenogenesis. In the first instar larvae of the locust *Schistocerca*, mortality is very high when they have been produced parthenogenetically. It seems that, in general, viability is much lower when parthenogenesis occurs. It is probably for this reason that the phenomenon is fairly rare: it is only likely to occur in those species living in relatively patchy habitats, the only situation in which it is of possible advantage, since it then allows rapid colonization of a new patch following invasion by a single individual. Furthermore, a patchy environment makes finding a mate difficult, so adding to the advantage of parthenogenesis. Reference: R. F. Chapman, 1971. *The Insects*, second edition. — P. J. JOHNSON, 7, Haverhill Road, Horseheath, Cambridge, CB1 6QR.

**UNUSUAL BEHAVIOUR OF MOMPHA NODICOLELLA FUCHS (LEP.: MOMPHIDAE).** — During the afternoon of 1st August 1980, I observed about a dozen small moths of the family Momphidae at St. Mary Magdalene Churchyard Museum Nature Reserve, London, E.6, engaging in a rather curious activity, which I have not previously observed. The moths were all upon the vertical, west facing surface of a limestone grave-stone, which was much weathered and extremely eroded in most parts. The air-temperature was approximately 22°C, and the sun shone directly onto the west face of the stone, and hence upon the moths.

Each of the moths was engaged in what I have called 'spiralling': that is, turning around by the motion of their legs in a tight circle, but with their heads remaining fixed so that the distal tip of the abdomen described an arc of 360 degrees around the head. I watched this behaviour for about